APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/943,628	08/28/2001	Harry A. Frolick	MY1SOLN.PT1	9685

			EXAMINER
24943	7590	09/15/2005	JARRETT, SCOTT L

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ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3623	

DATE MAILED: 09/15/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

PTO-90C (Rev. 10/03)

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Office Action Summary</td><td>Application No.
09/943,628</td><td>Applicant(s)
FROLICK ET AL.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Examiner
Scott L. Jarrett</td><td>Art Unit
3623</td></tr>
</table>

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on <u>28 August 2001</u>.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL.**   2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) <u>1-22</u> is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) <u>1-22</u> is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on <u>28 August 2001</u> is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

      1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3)☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>8/28/01</u>.

4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6)☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1.   Figure 1 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g). Corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Title

2.   The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

The following title is suggested: System and Method for Web-based Project Management and Collaboration.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3.   The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly
claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4.   Claims 11-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being

indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which

applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding Claim 11, Claim 11 recites the limitation "the **selected** team

members" in Claim 1. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the

claim.

Regarding Claim 12, Claim 12 recites the limitation "the **selected** group" in Claim

1. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5.   The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that

form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
> (a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed
> publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

6.   Claims 1-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by eRoom

Technology, Inc.'s eRoom system (product) as disclosed in at least the following:

I. eRoom 5.0 Help Manual, herein after reference A.

II. eRoom.com Product Pages (August 2000), herein after reference B.

III. Miller, Sandra, eRoom jump-starts project collaboration, herein after reference

C.

Regarding Claim 1 eRoom teaches the commercial availability and public use of

eRoom 5.0, a web-based project management and team collaboration system and

method utilizing secure virtual workspaces (eRooms) wherein the workspaces include

messaging, file sharing, multi-threaded discussions, change notification, calendaring,

email and the like (reference A: Welcome to eRoom, Pages 1-2; reference B: Pages 1-

2; reference: C, Page 2). Further the eRoom product pages teach that eRoom first

provided digital workspaces in 1997 (reference B: Page 11).

More specifically eRoom teaches a web-based project management system

comprising (reference B: Question 4, Page 6; Question 13, Page 11):

- a server (computer, device, etc.) having central storage memory (reference A:

System Structure, Page 2; "database", Page 11; reference B: Question 5, Pages 8-9);

- one or more clients (computers, devices, etc.) connected to the server for access by one or more team members (reference A: System Structure, Page 2; "database", Page 11; reference B: Question 5, Pages 8-9);

- receiving member profile information (reference A: Page 2; "Members and Roles", Pages 68-76);

- creating a member workspace corresponding to a user access level (security, permissions, etc.) that includes a list of other team members and a working relationship defined among the team members via a subsystem (component, code, "intuitive profiler", etc.; reference A: Member and Roles, Pages 2, 68-76; "Working with eRooms", Pages 27-29; security/access control, Pages 5, 7-8; "my eRoom", Page 3);

- enabling users to share (view, update, upload, download, etc.) one or more documents/files (reference A: "Working with Items", Pages 37-40; "Files", Pages 56-59);

- a subsystem for setting (creating, editing, generating, calendar scheduler, etc.) and displaying a task schedule via a web browser (calendar; Pages 11, 47-53; meetings, Pages 15-16);

- providing (notifying, sending, displaying, etc.) the task schedule (calendar) to a project supervisor (leader, manager, etc.) and the team members performing the task (reference A: nightly email notification, Page 29; "Managing Project Information", Pages 60-61);

- providing email (electronic email, e-mail, etc.) for communications among the team members (reference A: Inboxes, Pages 54-55); and

- storing, in memory, information submitted (sent, uploaded, provided, etc.) by

team members (reference A: Files, Pages 56-59).
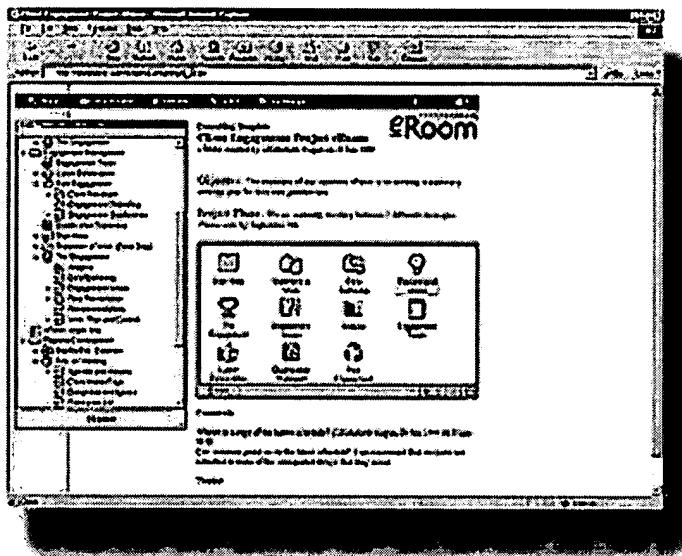
Figure 1: eRoom, reference B, Page 1

Regarding Claim 2, the web-based project management system as claimed is

merely adapted to authenticate team members, however the system does not actually

perform the authenticate team members. For the purposes of examination examiner

assumes the applicant will amend the claim to recite that the web-based project

management system actually authenticates team members.

Further regarding Claim 2 eRoom teaches a web-based project management

system and method wherein the system (subsystem, server, etc.) authenticates team

members (security, access control, login, etc.; reference A: Pages 5, 7-7, 65-67).

Regarding Claim 3 eRoom teaches a web-based project management system
and method wherein the system (subsystem, component, etc.) broadcasts (sends,
posts, etc.) the task schedule (calendar, meetings, events, etc.) to other team members
(reference A: calendaring, Pages 47-53; alerts, notification, meetings, events, etc.,
Pages 60-61).

Regarding Claim 4 eRoom teaches a web-based project management system
and method wherein the system automatically notifies, via email, team members of
updated task schedule information (reference A: Page 29; Keeping Track of New
Information, Pages 60-61).

Regarding Claim 5, the web-based project management system as claimed is
merely adapted to comply with the secure socket line security standard, however the
system does not actually comply with/utilize the secure socket line security standard.
For the purposes of examination examiner assumes the applicant will amend the claim
to recite that the web-based project management system actually utilizes the secure
socket line security standard.

Further regarding Claim 5 wherein the system utilizes secure socket line security
standard (secure socket layer, SSL; reference B: Bullet 2, Page 8; Question 10, Page
10; reference C: Page 2).

Regarding Claim 6 eRoom teaches a web-based project management system

and method further comprising notifying (sending, providing, displaying, etc.) team

members of at least one of the following (any of the following; alerts, notifications,

annotations, notes, comments, etc.; reference A: Pages 5, 23; 60-61; reference B:

Bullet 6, Page 7):

  - a new internal message (note, email, etc.);

  - a new posted/uploaded file/document on the member workspace

  - new task assigned to the team member; or

  - new note added to an object (file, note, project, email, etc.) the team member

has permission to view.

Regarding Claim 7 eRoom teaches a web-based project management system

and method wherein the system enables team members to determine who is

concurrently logged into the same member workspace via a real-time member login list

(e.g. buddy list; reference A: "Members Present", Page 11).

Regarding Claim 8 eRoom teaches a web-based project management system

and method further comprising displaying files (documents, objects, items, emails, etc.)

that a member has access to via a structured tree-view that utilizes folders (reference A:

Pages 3, 56-59).

Regarding Claim 9 eRoom teaches a web-based project management system and method wherein the uploaded file further comprises one or more original files uploaded by the team members (reference A: Pages 1, 56-59).

Regarding Claim 10 eRoom teaches a web-based project management system and method wherein the uploaded files/documents further comprise one or more having a universally accessed format (HTML, text, PDF, etc.; i.e. converted files; reference A: Pages 56-59).

Regarding Claim 11 eRoom teaches a web-based project management system and method further comprising a dialog box (form, field, pull-down, menu, etc.) for individually displaying team members (reference A: Members and Groups, Pages 68-76).

Regarding Claim 12 eRoom teaches a web-based project management system and method further a dialog box (form, field, pull-down, menu, etc.) for individually displaying a group list (reference A: Members and Groups, Pages 68-76).

Regarding Claim 13 eRoom teaches a web-based project management system and method further comprising a subsystem/system that enables a team member to select a project to work on (my eRoom; reference A: Pages 3, 12 and 28-29).

Regarding Claim 14, the web-based project management system as claimed is

merely adapted to allow a team member to specify a default member workspace,

however the system does not actually enable a team member to specify a default

member workspace. For the purposes of examination examiner assumes the applicant

will amend the claim to recite that the web-based project management system actually

enables a team member and the team member actually specifies a default member

workspace.

Further regarding Claim 14 eRoom teaches a web-based project management

system and method a system/subsystem allows a team member to specify a default

workspace to which the team member is directly logged into after the initial member

authorization (my eRooom; reference A: Pages 3, 12, 28-29).

Regarding Claim 15 eRoom teaches a web-based project management system

and method further comprising enabling a team member to add (post) a message (note,

comment, annotation, discussion posting, instant message, etc.) in a member

workspace, so as to be viewable by other team members, on files, folders or tasks and

further wherein the notes include author, data/time posted and message content

(subject, etc.; reference A: Pages 4 (comment), 23 (annotation), 37 and 50 (version

note)).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set
> forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and
> the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the
> invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains.
> Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

8.   Claims 16-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over

eRoom Technology, Inc.'s eRoom system (product) as disclosed in at least the

following:

I. eRoom 5.0 Help Manual, herein after reference A.

II. eRoom.com Product Pages, herein after reference B.

III. Miller, Sandra, eRoom jump-starts project collaboration, herein after reference

C.

as applied to claims 1-15 above and further in view of Pyron, Tim, Special Edition

Using Microsoft Project 2000.

Regarding Claim 16 eRoom teaches a web-based project management system

and method wherein email and instant messaging subsystems are utilized to alert/notify

team members of a plurality of events/activities as discussed above.

eRoom does not expressly teach that the notification (email) includes an

identification of the project that the email relates/pertains to (context) as claimed.

Official notice is taken that including a subject line (title, header, etc.) that describes the context of an email is old and very well known mechanism for informing/identifying the subject discussed in the email and/or the project (effort, task, initiative, etc.) it relates to.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the web-based project management system and method as taught by eRoom would have benefited from providing the context of an email (communication) in view of the teachings of official notice; the resultant system enabling the recipient to identify the context/subject of the notification in an efficient manner (i.e. knowing which project a notification is associated with).

Regarding Claim 17 eRoom teaches a web-based project management and team collaboration system and method as discussed above.

eRoom does not expressly teach that the system enables team members to assign a task to one or more team members or a group of team members as claimed.

Pyron teaches enabling team members to assign a task to one or more team members or a group of team members, in an analogous art of project management for the purposes of tracking the progress of a project (Chapter 15: Using Workgroups in Planning Process, Pages 108-118).

More generally Pyron teaches a web-based project management system and

method comprising task management, email, calendaring, file sharing, access

control/user authentication, and the like (Microsoft Project 2000, Project Central;

Chapter 15: Introduction to Microsoft Project Central, Pages 19-24; Chapter 15:

Analyzing Progress, Pages 73-107; Figures 2-4 below).
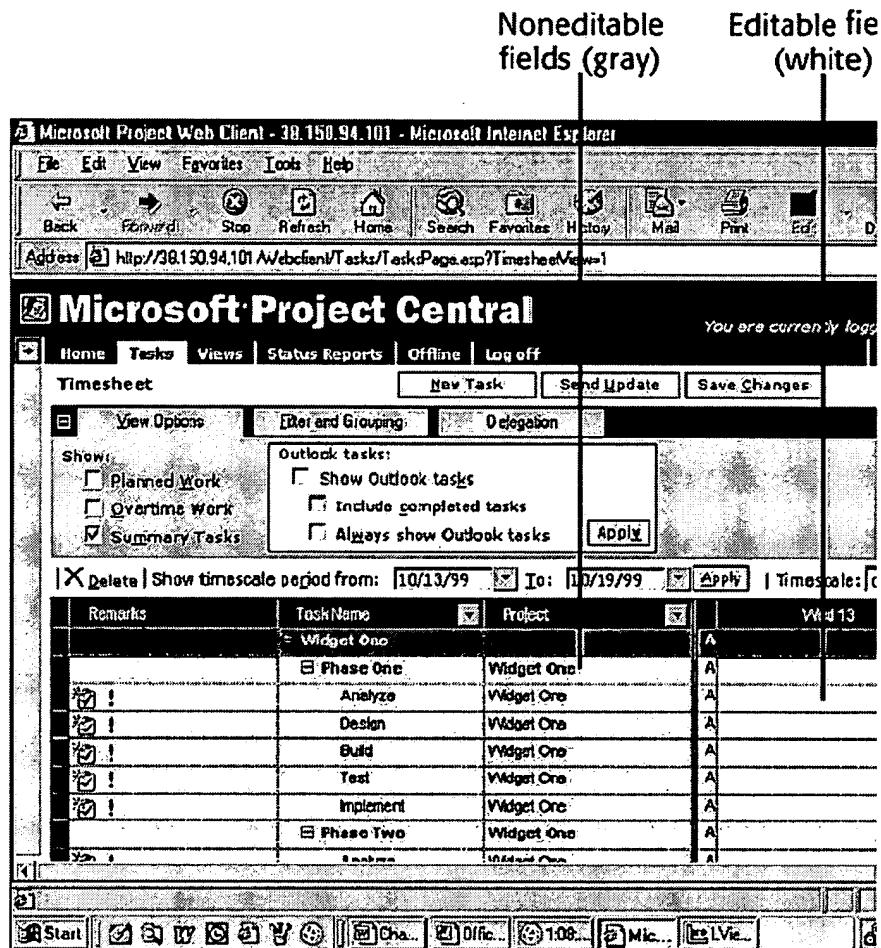
**Figure 2: Microsoft Project Central - Task Timesheet, Page 33**
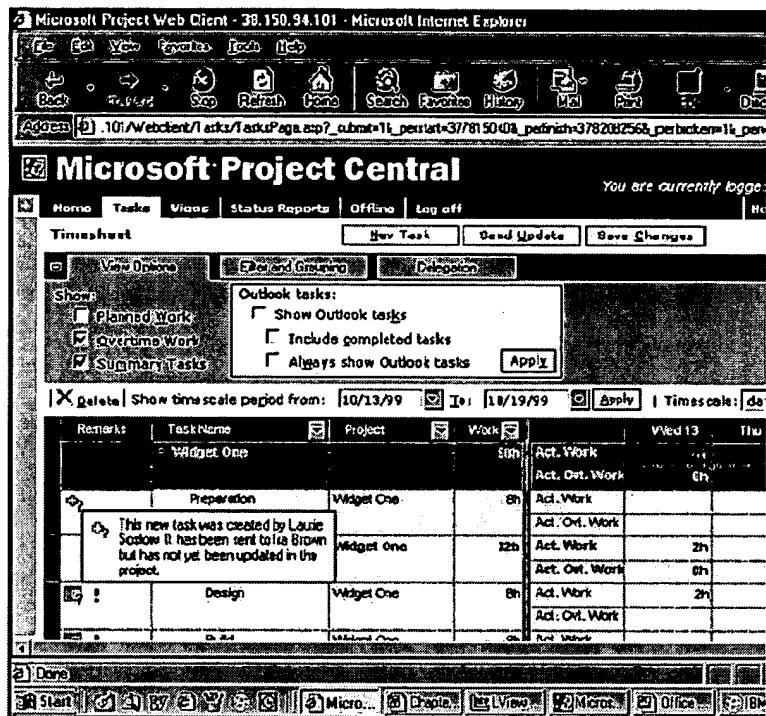
Figure 15.26. The project manager can add the task to the project plan by choosing the Updat

Figure 3: Microsoft Project Central – Task, Page 38

Figure 15.24. When requesting a new task, the team member must supply the appropriate inforı
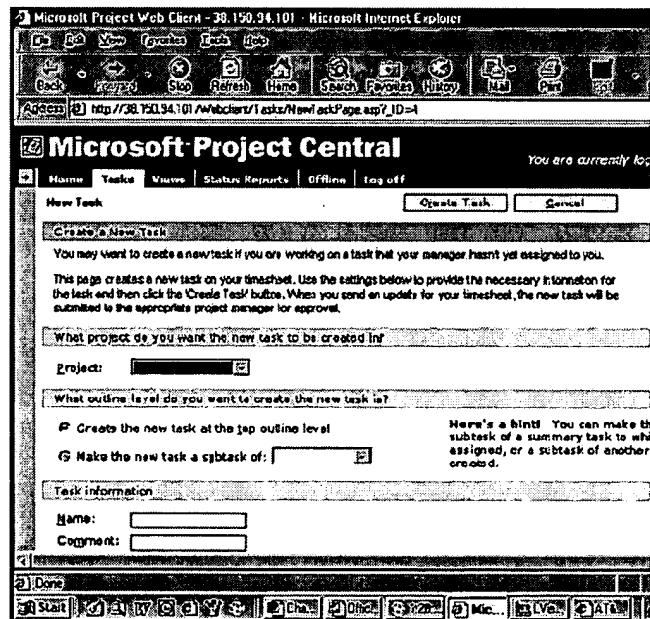

Figure 4: Microsoft Project Central - New Task, Page 36

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the web-based project management system and method as taught by eRoom would have benefited from enabling team members assign and track the progress of tasks assigned to one or more team members or groups in view of the teachings of Pyron; the resultant system enabling users to track and report on the project's progress.

Regarding Claim 18 eRoom does not expressly teach enabling team members to specify (define, describe, etc.) tasks as claimed.

Pyron teaches enabling team members to specify task information including: description, title and status (Chapter 15: Using Workgroups in Planning Process, Pages 108-118; Figures 2-4 above), in an analogous art of project management for the purpose of tracking project related tasks/activities.

Regarding Claim 19 eRoom does not expressly teach enabling users to marking one or more completed tasks as claimed.

Pyron teaches enabling the marking of one or more completed tasks (Chapter 15: Using Workgroups in the Tracking Process, Pages 119-137), in an analogous art of project management for the purposes of tracking the progress of team members assigned project tasks/activities.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention

that the web-based project management and team collaboration system and method as

taught by eRoom would have benefited from enabling team members to mark one or

more completed tasks in view of the teachings of Pyron; the resultant system enabling

team members to track the project's progress by identifying tasks that are complete.

Regarding Claim 20 eRoom teaches controlling access to the plurality of project

information as discussed above (reference A: Controlling Access, Pages 65-67).

eRoom does not expressly teach that the information under access control is

task information as claimed.

Pyron teaches enabling team members to view (access) task information, in an

analogous art of project management for the purposes of tracking and reporting the

project's progress (Chapter 15: Using Workgroups in the Tracking Process, Pages 172-

187; Figures 2-4 above).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention

that the web-based project management and team collaboration system and method as

taught by eRoom, with its ability to control access to the plurality of project information

would have benefited from enabling team members to select who may view (access)

task information in view of the teachings of Pyron; the resultant system enabling team

members to track the project's progress.

Regarding Claim 21 eRoom teaches a web-based project management system

and method wherein the system enables team members to select who is notified of one

or more project updates (eRoom monitor, alerts, notifications, etc.; reference A:

Managing Project Information, Pages 60-63).

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- Podgorny et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,078,948, teach a web-based system and method for team collaboration comprising one or more project/team/member workspaces (rooms).

- Mora et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,161,113, teach a system and method for enabling team project collaboration (e.g. email, document sharing, etc.) as part of well-known groupware systems (e.g. Lotus Notes).

- Salas et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,233,600, teach a web-based system and method for providing one or more collaborate workspaces (eRooms, environments) wherein the system enables team members to collaborate utilizing: file sharing, discussions (e.g. threaded discussions, bulletin board, etc.), notes and the like. Salas et al. further teach that these collaborative workspaces provide access control based on users/groups level of access permissions and that the plurality of project information is stored in one or more databases.

- Estrada et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,732,148, teach a web-based project team collaboration environment (Lotus QuickPlace, rooms, workspaces, etc.) comprising of email, calendaring/scheduling, chat/discussions, whiteboards, conferencing, document management/file sharing, workflow and the like. Estrada et al. further teach that team members can access the secure environment (each project's room/workspace),

upload/view files through the use of directories (folders) and file trees and that files are converted into a standard format once uploaded.

- Oppenheimer et al., U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0014477, teach a web-based project and team collaboration system and method comprising email, instant messaging, document management/file sharing, discussions, calendaring and the like. Oppenheimer et al. further teach that the web-based project and team collaboration system and method stores a plurality of project information in one or more databases and utilizes secure sockets layer encryption (SSL).

- Stevens Larry, Group(ware) Therapy, teaches commercial availability and use of groupware systems and methods that provide collaboration work environments (email, workflow, calendaring, scheduling, task management, document management, etc.) including but not limited to Lotus Notes, eRoom, HotOffice, Primavera, Microsoft and the like.

- eRoom Technology integrates with Microsoft Project 2000, teaches a commercially available web-based project management and project team collaboration system and method powered by eRoom and Microsoft Project Central.

- Fisher, Dennis, Taming Web Projects teaches a plurality of commercially available web-based project and team collaboration systems and methods including eRoom 5.0, QuickPlace and PowerSteering.

- Moore, Cathleen, Web collaboration tools enliven enterprises teaches a plurality of web-based project management and team collaboration systems and methods including but not limited to eRoom 5.0, Practivity 4.0 and c-Apps. Moore

further teaches that eRoom provides collaboration workspaces for sharing documents and project tasks.

- Gill, Shammi, Strength in groups, teaches the commercial availability of a plurality of web-based project and team collaboration system and methods including but not limited to eRoom 5.0, Team Center 4.0.3 and WebWorkZone. Gill further teaches that eRoom provides secure project environments and provides a customized home page for project members wherein the page displays the project(s) the team member is assigned to.

- Carroll, Sean, Collaboration, teaches a plurality of web-based team collaboration (virtual offices) systems including but not limited to eRoom, LiveOffice, onProject, QuickTeam and the like.

- eRoom.com product pages (March 2000), teaches the commercial availability of a web-based project collaboration system and method (eRoom).

- Drucker, David, Project Collaboration, teaches a plurality of commercially available web-based project management tools including but not limited to eRoom 5.0.

- Orfali, Robert et al., teaches the old and very well known utilization of groupware systems that enable project and team collaboration and typically comprise document management, email, calendaring, group conferencing and workflow.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott L. Jarrett whose telephone number is (571) 272-7033. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:00AM - 5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hafiz Tariq can be reached on (571) 272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

SJ
9/12/2005

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